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# PROCEEDINGS

## International Seminar

LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE AND SHIFT V

September 2–3, 2015



**Revised Edition**

Master Program in Linguistics, Diponegoro University  
in Collaboration with  
Balai Bahasa Provinsi Jawa Tengah



# Proceedings International Seminar Language Maintenance and Shift V

“The Role of Indigenous Languages in Constructing Identity”

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## NOTE

This international seminar on Language Maintenance and Shift V (LAMAS V for short) is a continuation of the previous LAMAS seminars conducted annually by the Master Program in Linguistics, Diponegoro University in cooperation with *Balai Bahasa Provinsi Jawa Tengah*.

We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the seminar committee for putting together the seminar that gave rise to this compilation of papers. Thanks also go to the Head and the Secretary of the Master Program in Linguistics Diponegoro University, without whom the seminar would not have been possible.

The table of contents lists 92 papers presented at the seminar. Of these papers, 5 papers are presented by invited keynote speakers. They are Prof. Aron Reppmann, Ph.D. (Trinity Christian College, USA), Prof. Yudha Thianto, Ph.D. (Trinity Christian College, USA), Dr. Priyankoo Sarmah, Ph.D. (Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati, India), Helena I.R. Agustien, Ph.D. (Semarang State University, Indonesia), and Dr. M. Suryadi, M.Hum. (Diponegoro University, Indonesia).

In terms of the topic areas, the papers are in sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, theoretical linguistics, antropolinguistics, pragmatics, applied linguistics, and discourse analysis.



**NOTE FOR REVISED EDITION**

There is a little change in this revised edition, which as the shifting of some parts of the article by Tatan Tawami and Retno Purwani Sari entitled “Sundanese Identity Represented by the Talents of *Ini Talkshow* A Study of Pragmatics” on page 166 to 167. This has an impact on the change of table of contents.



**SCHEDULE OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE AND SHIFT V  
"The Role of Indigenous Languages in Constructing Identity"**

<b>WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2015</b>					
<b>TIME</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>PAGE</b>	<b>ROOM</b>	<b>CHAIR PERSON</b>
07.00 - 08.00	<b>REGISTRATION</b>			LOBBY	Committee
08.00 - 08.15	<b>SPEECH FROM THE COMMITTEE</b>			KRYPTON	Head of Committee
08.15 - 08.30	<b>OPENING</b>			KRYPTON	Dean of FIB Undip
08.30 - 10.30	<b>PLENARY SESSION 1</b>			KRYPTON	Dr. Nurhayati, M.Hum.
	Prof. Aron Reppmann, Ph.D.	CODE SWITCHING IN CARTHAGE: AUGUSTINE'S USE OF THE PUNIC LANGUAGE AS AN INSTRUMENT OF CULTURAL UNITY	1 - 7		
	Prof. Yudha Thianto, Ph.D.	LOAN WORDS AS SHAPERS OF IDENTITY IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY MALAY: A HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS STUDY OF CHRISTIAN SONGS INTRODUCED BY THE VOC	19 - 27		
	Dr. Priyankoo Sarmah, Ph.D.	LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE AND SHIFT: THE ASSAM SORA PERSPECTIVE	8 - 18		
10.30 - 11.00	<b>COFFEE BREAK</b>			RESTO	
11.00 - 12.30	<b>PARALLEL 1 A</b>			KRYPTON I	Committee
	Nasariah Mansor, Nooriza Wahab	ANALISIS KESALAHAN BAHASA: PERBANDINGAN ANTARA PELAJAR KELAS CEMERLANG DAN PELAJAR KELAS KURANG CEMERLANG	328 - 331		
	Deli Nirmala	ATTITUDES TOWARDS JAVANESE LANGUAGE AND ITS MAINTENANCE BY THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS OF DIPONEGORO UNIVERSITY	58 - 62		
	Pradnya Permanasari	WILL JAVANESE LANGUAGE BECOME EXTINCT?	114 - 118		
	Siti Suharsih	PENGGUNAAN BAHASA JAWA DIALEK BANTEN DI KALANGAN MAHASISWA (STUDI KASUS PADA DUA PTN DI PROPINSI BANTEN)	378 - 381		
	<b>PARALLEL 1 B</b>			KRYPTON II	Committee
	Ahmad Jazuly	IMPLEMENTASI PENGEMBANGAN BAHASA PADA ANAK USIA DINI	201 - 205		
	Eric Kunto Aribowo	SELAMATKAN PERKAWINANMU, SELAMATKAN BAHASAMU: CATATAN MENGENAI DAMPAK POSITIF PERKAWINAN ENDOGAMI TERHADAP BAHASA MASYARAKAT KETURUNAN ARAB DI PASAR KLIWON SURAKARTA	271 - 275		
	Sudirman Wilian	PELESTARIAN BAHASA DAERAH MELALUI PENULISAN DAN PENERBITAN BUKU	387 - 391		
Ika Inayati	PEMERTAHANAN BAHASA DAERAH DALAM PUISI TERJEMAHAN	296 - 299			



TIME	NAME	TITLE	PAGE	ROOM	CHAIR PERSON
11.00 - 12.30	<b>PARALLEL 1 C</b>			KRYPTON III	Committee
	Jumharia Djamereng	INFLUENTIAL FACTORS IN THE MAINTENANCE OF TAMIL LANGUAGE AMONG INDIAN SOCIETIES IN MEDAN, NORTH SUMATERA	77 - 80		
	Masruddin	WOTU LANGUAGE IN ENDANGERED PHASE : SOLUTION FOR REVITALIZING WOTU LANGUAGE	91 - 94		
	Siti Fitriati	GAYA BAHASA DALAM SASTRA LISAN LAMPUNG PEPANCOGH	374 - 377		
	Sofi Aulia Rahmania	RAGAM DIALEK PADA MASYARAKAT TUTUR KABUPATEN DEMAK	382 - 386		
	<b>PARALLEL 1 D</b>			MATRIX	Committee
	Ribut Surjowati	NEWSPAPER IDEOLOGY: CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS ON 2002 BALI BOMBING AND PAPUA CONFLICT REPORTED BY SYDNEY MORNING HERALD	129 - 133		
	Risha Devina Rahzanie	KEBERPIHAKAN BAHASA JURNALISTIK MEDIA MASSA DALAM KERAJAAN JOKOWI	365 - 368		
	Nurhayati	POLITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF MEGAWATI'S SPEEC IN THE OPENING OF THE FOURTH CONGRESS OF THE PDIP	105 - 109		
P. Ari Subagyo	JEJAK KUASA DALAM SABDA RAJA DAN DHAWUH RAJA: TINJAUAN ANALISIS WACANA KRITIS	350 - 354			
12.30 - 13.30	<b>LUNCH BREAK</b>			RESTO	
13.30 - 15.00	<b>PARALLEL 2 A</b>			KRYPTON I	Committee
	Rosida Tiurma Manurung	ANALISIS DIMENSI SOSIAL, BUDAYA, DAN EKONOMI DALAM FENOMENA ALIH KODE DI RUSUNAWA	369 - 373		
	Antonius Suratno, Cecilia T Murniati, Emilia N Aydawati	A STUDY OF THE PERCPtual BELIEFS AND THE USE OF INFORMAION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING	39 - 43		
	Pradiptia Wulan Utami	ALIH KODE DAN CAMPUR KODE DALAM ACARA "BUKAN SEKEDAR WAYANG" DI NET TV: SUATU KAJIAN SOSIOLINGUISTIK	355 - 359		
	Rin Surtantini, Teguh Imam Subarkah	LANGUAGE INFERIORITY OF NON-MAINSTREAM VERNACULAR: A CASE OF NGAPAK AND BANDHEK DIALECTS	124 - 128		
	<b>PARALLEL 2 B</b>			KRYPTON II	Committee
	Agus Hari Wibowo	PERMASALAHAN PENGUCAPAN BUNYI VOKAL BAHASA INGGRIS	197 - 200		
	Apriliya Dwi Prihatiningtyas	PENGARUH SISTEM FONOLOGI BAHASA PERTAMA TERHADAP PEMBELAJARAN BAHASA KEDUA: STUDI KASUS PADA PENUTUR BAHASA CINA DAN JEPANG	229 - 232		
	Eko Widiyanto	INTERFERENSI BAHASA ARAB DAN BAHASA JAWA PADA TUTURAN MASYARAKAT PONDOK PESANTREN SEBAGAI GEJALA PERGESERAN BAHASA	262 - 266		
Taufik Suadiyatno	MOTHER-TONGUE (L1) PHONOLOGICAL INTERFERENCEIN THE SPOKEN ENGLISH OF SOUVENIR SELLERS IN LOMBOK	170 - 174			

TIME	NAME	TITLE	PAGE	ROOM	CHAIR PERSON
13.30 - 15.00	<b>PARALLEL 2 C</b>			KRYPTON III	Committee
	Amy Sabila	SEBAMBANGAN CULTURAL SOCIETY IN THE DISTRICT OF LAMPUNG PEPADUN KIBANG BUDI JAYA UNIT 6 TULANG BAWANG LAMPUNG	210 - 214		
	Pininta Veronika Silalahi	LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY IN THE WEDDING CEREMONY OF BATAK TOBA	110 - 113		
	Raheni Suhita, Djoko Sulaksono, Kenfitria Diah Wijayanti	DAYA PRAGMATIK DAN FUNGSI MANTRA PENGLARISAN BAGI MASYARAKAT JAWA	360 - 364		
	Adam Damanhuri	MADURESE PROVERBS (A SOCIOLINGUISTICS COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE OF MADURESE MEANING OF LIFE)	28 - 29		
	<b>PARALLEL 2 D</b>			MATRIX	Committee
	Angga Cahyaning Utami	REALISASI TUTURAN EKSPRESIF TENAGA KERJA WANITA DALAM FILM MINGGU PAGI DI VICTORIA PARK	215 - 219		
	Rosaria Mita Amalia, Rani Sitifitriani	APPLICATION OF PERFORMATIVE CONCEPT ON ENGLISH LEGAL DOCUMENTS: A STUDY OF PRAGMATICS	134 - 138		
	Athiyah Salwa	THE INFLUENCE OF MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY IN INDONESIAN SONG LYRICS	248 - 252		
	Cahyo Ramadani, Aris Munandar	PRESERVING VERNACULARS IN INDONESIA: A BILINGUAL VERNACULAR-ENGLISH DICTIONARY APPROACH	49 - 53		
15.00 - 16.30	<b>PARALLEL 3 A</b>			KRYPTON I	Committee
	Titi Puji Lestari	PERILAKU SOSIAL MASYARAKAT INDONESIA AKIBAT KOSA KATA SERAPAN BAHASA ASING DALAM BIDANG TEKNOLOGI DAN KULINER	399 - 403		
	Eny Setyowati, Sri Pamungkas	PERSINGGUNGAN ANTARBAHASA MASYARAKAT NELAYAN DI PESISIR PANTAI SELATAN PACITAN	267 - 270		
	Clara Herlina Karjo	IMPACTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA TOWARDS LANGUAGE SHIFT AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS	54 - 57		
	Melor Fauzita Binti Md. Yusoff	AMALAN KESANTUNAN BERBAHASA BAHASA ARAHAN GOLONGAN MAHASISWA	308 - 312	KRYPTON II	Committee
	<b>PARALLEL 3 B</b>				
	Nursyifa Azzahro	MAKNA SIMBOLIK PERMAINAN CINGCIRIPIT SERTA MANFAATNYA BAGI PENDIDIKAN KARAKTER ANAK	345 - 349		
	I Nengah Suandi	PENYUSUNAN KAMUS SERAPAN SEBAGAI UPAYA PEMERTAHANAN BAHASA DAERAH DI INDONESIA	291 - 295		
	Favorita Kurwidaria	KEUNIKAN DAN KEESTETISAN PEMAKAIAN BAHASA RINENGA DALAM WACANA PANYANDRA UPACARA ADAT PERNIKAHAN MASYARAKAT JAWA	286 - 290		
	Lalu Ari Irawan, Susanto, Suharsono	THINK IN SASAK, SPEAK IN ENGLISH	86 - 90		

TIME	NAME	TITLE	PAGE	ROOM	CHAIR PERSON
15.00 - 16.30	<b>PARALLEL 3 C</b>			KRYPTON III	Committee
	Faizah Ahmad, Hishamudin Isam, Mashetoh Abd Mutalib	PERSEPSI GURU TERHADAP PENGGUNAAN DATA KORPUS DALAM PENGAJARAN TATA BAHASA BAHASA MELAYU	285 - 289		
	Suparto	ADJECTIVISH INDONESIAN VERBS: A COGNITIVE SEMANTICS PERSPECTIVE	161 - 165		
	Mulyadi	CATEGORIZATION OF EMOTION VERBS IN BAHASA INDONESIA	95 - 99		
	Siyaswati	POLITENESS STRATEGY IN AMERICAN FOLKTALES: "JACK AND THE BEANSTALK"	143 - 146	MATRIX	Committee
	<b>PARALLEL 3 D</b>				
	Prihantoro	PROPER WORDS TO COMMON WORDS CONVERSION: THE FAMOUS, THE INFAMOUS AND THE GROWTH OF INFORMAL LEXICON	119 - 123		
	Tri Wahyu Retno Ningsih	PERSEPSI HIGH FUNCTIONING AUTISM TERHADAP ASPEK FONEMIS	409 - 412		
	Netty Nurdiani	NAMA DIRI ANAK JAWA DI ERA GLOBAL	332 - 335		
Ani Rachmat	ISTILAH KEKERABATAN SEBAGAI FRAGMENT DARI NATIONAL WORLD-VIEW	220 - 223			
16.30 - 17.00	<b>COFFEE BREAK</b>			RESTO	
19.00 - 21.00	<b>DINNER</b>			KRYPTON	
<b>THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2015</b>					
07.30 - 08.00	<b>REGISTRATION</b>			LOBBY	Committee
08.00 - 10.00	<b>PLENARY SESSION 2</b>			KRYPTON	Drs. Pardi, M.Hum. & Herudjati Purwoko, Ph.D.
	Prof. Dr. Mahsun, M.S.	-			
	Helena I.R. Agustien, Ph.D.	PENINGKATAN LITERASI SEKOLAH: APA IMPLIKASINYA BAGI PARA PENDIDIK?	187 - 191		
M. Suryadi	TRIPILAR PELURUSLERESAN BASA ALUS SEMARANGAN UPAYA TERHADAP PELESTARIAN BAHASA IBU	192 - 196			
10.00 - 10.30	<b>COFFEE BREAK</b>			RESTO	
10.30 - 12.30	<b>PARALLEL 4 A</b>			KRYPTON I	Committee
	Asrofah, Festi Himatu Karima, Larasati	FETISME BAHASA DALAM LAGU POPULER	243 - 247		
	Y.B. Agung Prasaja	REVISITING MODEL OF READING COMPREHENSION IN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION	180 - 182		
	Nungki Heriyati, M. Rayhan Bustam	PEMENANG VS "ORANG YANG KALAH": REFLEKSI IDENTITAS DAN BUDAYA BANGSA	336 - 340		
	Susi Machdalena	KEUNIKAN ANTROPONIM RUSIA KAJIAN ANTROPONIMIKA	396 - 398		
Ali Badrudin	MENGUNGKAP PENGETAHUAN LOKAL MASYARAKAT JAWA DALAM BERINTERAKSI DENGAN LINGKUNGAN MELALUI SASMITA JAWA	206 - 209			

TIME	NAME	TITLE	PAGE	ROOM	CHAIR PERSON
10.30 - 12.30	<b>PARALLEL 4 B</b>			KRYPTON II	Committee
	Asih Prihandini, Novian Denny Nugraha	KONSUKSI BAHASA DALAM SLOGAN (TAGLINE) IDENTITAS TUJUAN WISATA (DESTINATION BRANDING) DI ENAM KOTA DI INDONESIA	238 - 242		
	Welsi Damayanti	FONOLOGI BAHASA MELAYU PROVINSI RIAU DAN BAHASA MINANG TANAH DATAR SUMATERA BARAT	426 - 429		
	Antonio Constantino Soares	PASSIVE-LIKE CONSTRUCTIONS IN MAKASAE LANGUAGE	35 - 38		
	Indrawati Pusparini	THE LANGUAGE STYLE ANALYSIS IN JOB ADVERTISEMENT FOUND IN KOMPAS NEWSPAPER	72 - 76		
	Mohd. Rasdi bin Saamah, Abu Hassan Abdul	PERSAMAAN LAMBANG DAN MAKNA DALAM PERIBAHASA SEMAI DAN PERIBAHASA MELAYU	313 - 317		
	<b>PARALLEL 4 C</b>			KRYPTON III	Committee
	Asep Burhan Nurdin, Dina Manda Putri, Dina Rosdiana, Prifita Alina Pergiwati	THE PRESERVATION OF SUNDANESE LANGUAGE IN MULTI-ETHNIC FAMILIES: THE RESEARCH OF SOCIOLINGUISTICS IN SAWARNA VILLAGE, BAYAH SUB-DISTRICT, LEBAK REGENCY	233 - 237		
	Veria Septianingtias	MORFOFONEMIK BAHASA INDONESIA DAN BAHASA LAMPUNG: KAJIAN MORFOLOGI KONTRASTIF	417 - 420		
	Trisnowati Tanto	LANGUAGE PLAY AND ITS FUNCTIONS IN CHILDREN'S FICTION	175 - 179		
	Herudjati Purwoko	LET'S "HAVE A LISTEN" TO A RADIO TALK	67 - 71		
	Juanda	"PUPUH" SEBUAH PROYEKSI PENGEMBANGAN KARAKTER SISWA	300 - 303		
	<b>PARALLEL 4 D</b>			MATRIX	Committee
	Kasno Pamungkas	WORD FORMATION AND PRODUCT NAMING STRATEGY: A STUDY OF MORPHOLOGY	81 - 85		
Tubiyono	PENG-IKON-AN WANITA KARIR DALAM MEDIA CETAK	413 - 416			
Afritta Dwi Martyawati	SIKAP BAHASA ETNIS JAWA TERHADAP BAHASA JAWA DI LUAR HOMELANDNYA	193 - 196			
Nunung Supriadi	PERAN BAHASA JAWA DIALEK BANYUMAS TERHADAP PERKEMBANGAN BAHASA MANDARIN DI PURWOKERTO	341 - 344			
12.30 - 13.30	<b>LUNCH BREAK</b>			RESTO	
13.30 - 15.30	<b>PARALLEL 5 A</b>			KRYPTON I	Committee
	Andi Rizki Fauzi	PROMOTING OUTCOME BASED LEARNING (OBL) IN A LINGUISTICS COURSE	30 - 34		
	Baharuddin	NATURALNESS IN TRANSLATION OF ENGLISH NOVEL INTO INDONESIAN	44 - 48		
	Farikah	THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TALKING STICK TECHNIQUE IN TEACHING WRITING OF HORTATORY EXPOSITION TEXTS	63 - 66		
	Nani Sunarni	PEMAKNAAN LEKSIKON GERAKAN TARI TRADISI SEBAGAI IDENTITAS MASYARAKAT SUNDA ( LC)	323 - 327		
	Euis Kurniasih	KATA SAPAAN DALAM SAWALA LUHUNG MASYARAKAT ADAT KARUHUN URANG	276 - 280		

TIME	NAME	TITLE	PAGE	ROOM	CHAIR PERSON
13.30 - 15.30	<b>PARALLEL 5 B</b>				
	Annisa Herdini	STRUKTUR SILABEL BAHASA INDONESIA: KAJIAN TEORI OPTIMALITAS	224 - 228	KRYPTON II	Committee
	Desie Natalia	SUNDANESE VOCABULARIES IN KAMUS URBAN INDONESIA: AN EFFORT TOWARD POSITIVE LANGUAGE ATTITUDE THROUGH LEXICOGRAPHIC TRANSLATION	253 - 256		
	Wati Kurniawati	AKOMODASI TUTURAN MASYARAKAT SAMBAU DI WILAYAH PERBATASAN	421 - 425		
	Suharno	TRANSLATION AND CROSS CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING (CCU)	156 - 160		
	Widyatmike Gede Mulawarman	PERAN INTEGRASI LEKSIKAL BAHASA MELAYU MALAYSIA KE DALAM BAHASA INDONESIA PADA MASYARAKAT DESA TANJUNG ARU KECAMATAN SEBATIK TIMUR	430 - 433		
	<b>PARALLEL 5 C</b>				
	Subur Laksmono Wardoyo, Ririn Ambarini, Sri Suneki	DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL VALUES AND CONSTRUCTIVISM THROUGH THE BILINGUAL LEARNING MODEL WITH A BCCT APPROACH (BEYOND CENTER AND CIRCLE TIME) IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN SEMARANG1	151 - 155	KRYPTON III	Committee
	Sri Rejeki Urip	PRAGMATICS IN THE FRENCH CLASSROOM AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE	147 - 150		
	Djarmika	KUALITAS KETERAMPILAN BERBAHASA JAWA PENUTUR BELIA DI SURAKARTA: SEBUAH FENOMENA PEMEROLEHAN BAHASA	257 - 261		
	Muhammad Iqbal Suhartomo, Riza Taufiq Rizki	BENTUK PERCAKAPAN WACANA HUMOR PADA ACARA PSBUKERS ANTV : SEBUAH KAJIAN PRAGMATIK	318 - 322		
	Tatan Tawami, Retno Purwani Sari	SUNDANESE IDENTITY REPRESENTED BY THE TALENTS OF INI TALKSHOW A STUDY OF PRAGMATICS	166 - 169		
	<b>PARALLEL 5 D</b>				
	Kahar Dwi Prihantono	PEMERTAHANAN DAN REVITALISASI BAHASA DAERAH DALAM PENERJEMAHAN TEATRICAL	304 - 307	MATRIX	Committee
	Titin Lestari	KONSEP PENGETAHUAN DALAM PUPUJIAN SUNDA KANGJENG NABI: KAJIAN ANTROPOLINGUISTIK DI DESA GIRI ASIH KAB. BANDUNG BARAT	404 - 408		
	Mytha Candria	THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS' USE OF JAVANESE LANGUAGE	100 - 104		
	Rukni Setyawati	REALIZING THE GREAT NATION THROUGH CULTURAL LITERACY	139 - 142		
Sumarlam, Djarmika, Sri Pamungkas	GANGGUAN EKSPRESI BERBAHASA PADA PENDERITA DEMENSIA DI KOTA SURAKARTA	392 - 395			
15.30 - 16.00	<b>CLOSING</b>			KRYPTON	Head of Balai Bahasa Provinsi Jawa Tengah

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Note	iii
Note for Revised Edition	v
Schedule of the International Seminar Language Maintenance and Shift V	vii
Table of Contents	xiii
CODE SWITCHING IN CARTHAGE: AUGUSTINE'S USE OF THE PUNIC LANGUAGE AS AN INSTRUMENT OF CULTURAL UNITY	
Aron Reppmann	1
LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE AND SHIFT: THE ASSAM SORA PERSPECTIVE	
Priyankoo Sarmah	8
LOAN WORDS AS SHAPERS OF IDENTITY IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY MALAY: A HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS STUDY OF CHRISTIAN SONGS INTRODUCED BY THE VOC	
Yudha Thianto	19
MADURESE PROVERBS (A SOCIOLINGUISTICS COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE OF MADURESE MEANING OF LIFE)	
Adam Damanhuri	28
PROMOTING OUTCOME BASED LEARNING (OBL) IN A LINGUISTICS COURSE	
Andi Rizki Fauzi	30
PASSIVE-LIKE CONSTRUCTIONS IN MAKASAE LANGUAGE	
Antonio Constantino Soares	35
A STUDY OF THE PERCEPTUAL BELIEFS AND THE USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING	
Antonius Suratno, Cecilia T Murniati, Emilia N Aydawati	39
NATURALNESS IN TRANSLATION OF ENGLISH NOVEL INTO INDONESIAN	
Baharuddin	44
PRESERVING VERNACULARS IN INDONESIA: A BILINGUAL VERNACULAR-ENGLISH DICTIONARY APPROACH	
Cahyo Ramadani, Aris Munandar	49
IMPACTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA TOWARDS LANGUAGE SHIFT AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS	
Clara Herlina Karjo	54
ATTITUDES TOWARDS JAVANESE LANGUAGE AND ITS MAINTENANCE BY THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS OF DIPONEGORO UNIVERSITY	
Deli Nirmala	58

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TALKING STICK TECHNIQUE IN TEACHING WRITING OF HORTATORY EXPOSITION TEXTS	
Farikah	63
LET'S "HAVE A LISTEN" TO A RADIO TALK	
Herudjati Purwoko	67
THE LANGUAGE STYLE ANALYSIS IN JOB ADVERTISEMENT FOUND IN KOMPAS NEWSPAPER	
Indrawati Pusparini	72
INFLUENTIAL FACTORS IN THE MAINTENANCE OF TAMIL LANGUAGE AMONG INDIAN SOCIETIES IN MEDAN, NORTH SUMATERA	
Jumharia Djamereng	77
WORD FORMATION AND PRODUCT NAMING STRATEGY: A STUDY OF MORPHOLOGY	
Kasno Pamungkas	81
THINK IN SASAK, SPEAK IN ENGLISH	
Lalu Ari Irawan, Susanto, Suharsono	86
WOTU LANGUAGE IN ENDANGERED PHASE : SOLUTION FOR REVITALIZING WOTU LANGUAGE	
Masruddin	91
CATEGORIZATION OF EMOTION VERBS IN BAHASA INDONESIA	
Mulyadi	95
THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS' USE OF JAVANESE LANGUAGE	
Mytha Candria	100
POLITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF MEGAWATI'S SPEECH IN THE OPENING OF THE FOURTH CONGRESS OF THE PDIP	
Nurhayati	105
LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY IN THE WEDDING CEREMONY OF BATAK TOBA	
Pininta Veronika Silalahi	110
WILL JAVANESE LANGUAGE BECOME EXTINCT?	
Pradnya Permanasari	114
PROPER WORDS TO COMMON WORDS CONVERSION: THE FAMOUS, THE INFAMOUS AND THE GROWTH OF INFORMAL LEXICON	
Prihantoro	119
LANGUAGE INFERIORITY OF NON-MAINSTREAM VERNACULAR: A CASE OF NGAPAK AND BANDHEK DIALECTS	
Rin Surtantini, Teguh Imam Subarkah	124
NEWSPAPER IDEOLOGY: CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS ON 2002 BALI BOMBING AND PAPUA CONFLICT REPORTED BY SYDNEY MORNING HERALD	
Ribut Surjowati	129

APPLICATION OF PERFORMATIVE CONCEPT ON ENGLISH LEGAL DOCUMENTS: A STUDY OF PRAGMATICS	
Rosaria Mita Amalia, Rani Sitifitriani	134
REALIZING THE GREAT NATION THROUGH CULTURAL LITERACY	
Rukni Setyawati	139
POLITENESS STRATEGY IN AMERICAN FOLKTALES: "JACK AND THE BEANSTALK"	
Siyaswati	143
PRAGMATICS IN THE FRENCH CLASSROOM AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE	
Sri Rejeki Urip	147
DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL VALUES AND CONSTRUCTIVISM THROUGH THE BILINGUAL LEARNING MODEL WITH A BCCT APPROACH (BEYOND CENTER AND CIRCLE TIME) IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN SEMARANG1	
Subur Laksmono Wardoyo, Ririn Ambarini, Sri Suneki	151
TRANSLATION AND CROSS CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING (CCU)	
Suharno	156
ADJECTIVISH INDONESIAN VERBS: A COGNITIVE SEMANTICS PERSPECTIVE	
Suparto	161
SUNDANESE IDENTITY REPRESENTED BY THE TALENTS OF INI TALKSHOW A STUDY OF PRAGMATICS	
Tatan Tawami, Retno Purwani Sari	166
MOTHER-TONGUE (L1) PHONOLOGICAL INTERFERENCEIN THE SPOKEN ENGLISH OF SOUVENIR SELLERS IN LOMBOK	
Taufik Suadiyatno	170
LANGUAGE PLAY AND ITS FUNCTIONS IN CHILDREN'S FICTION	
Trisnowati Tanto	175
REVISITING MODEL OF READING COMPREHENSION IN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION	
Y.B. Agung Prasaja	180
PENINGKATAN LITERASI SEKOLAH: APA IMPLIKASINYA BAGI PARA PENDIDIK?	
Helena I.R. Agustien	183
TRIPILAR PELURUSLERESAN BASA ALUS SEMARANGAN UPAYA TERHADAP PELESTARIAN BAHASA IBU	
M. Suryadi	188
SIKAP BAHASA ETNIS JAWA TERHADAP BAHASA JAWA DI LUAR HOMELANDNYA	
Afritta Dwi Martyawati	193
PERMASALAHAN PENGUCAPAN BUNYI VOKAL BAHASA INGGRIS	
Agus Hari Wibowo	197



IMPLEMENTASI PENGEMBANGAN BAHASA PADA ANAK USIA DINI Ahmad Jazuly	201
MENGUNGKAP PENGETAHUAN LOKAL MASYARAKAT JAWA DALAM BERINTERAKSI DENGAN LINGKUNGAN MELALUI SASMITA JAWA Ali Badrudin	206
SEBAMBANGAN CULTURAL SOCIETY IN THE DISTRICT OF LAMPUNG PEPADUN KIBANG BUDI JAYA UNIT 6 TULANG BAWANG LAMPUNG Amy Sabila	210
REALISASI TUTURAN EKSPRESIF TENAGA KERJA WANITA DALAM FILM MINGGU PAGI DI VICTORIA PARK Angga Cahyaning Utami	215
ISTILAH KEKERABATAN SEBAGAI FRAGMENT DARI NATIONAL WORLD-VIEW Ani Rachmat	220
STRUKTUR SILABEL BAHASA INDONESIA: KAJIAN TEORI OPTIMALITAS Annisa Herdini	224
PENGARUH SISTEM FONOLOGI BAHASA PERTAMA TERHADAP PEMBELAJARAN BAHASA KEDUA: STUDI KASUS PADA PENUTUR BAHASA CINA DAN JEPANG Apriliya Dwi Prihatiningtyas	229
THE PRESERVATION OF SUNDANESE LANGUAGE IN MULTI-ETHNIC FAMILIES: THE RESEARCH OF SOCIOLINGUISTICS IN SAWARNA VILLAGE, BAYAH SUB-DISTRICT, LEBAK REGENCY Asep Burhan Nurdin, Dina Manda Putri, Dina Rosdiana, Prifta Alina Pergiwati	233
KONSTRUKSI BAHASA DALAM SLOGAN (TAGLINE) IDENTITAS TUJUAN WISATA (DESTINATION BRANDING) DI ENAM KOTA DI INDONESIA Asih Prihandini, Novian Denny Nugraha	238
FETISME BAHASA DALAM LAGU POPULER Asrofah, Festi Himatu Karima, Larasati	243
THE INFLUENCE OF MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY IN INDONESIAN SONG LYRICS Athiyah Salwa	248
SUNDANESE VOCABULARIES IN KAMUS URBAN INDONESIA: AN EFFORT TOWARD POSITIVE LANGUAGE ATTITUDE THROUGH LEXICOGRAPHIC TRANSLATION Desie Natalia	253
KUALITAS KETERAMPILAN BERBAHASA JAWA PENUTUR BELIA DI SURAKARTA: SEBUAH FENOMENA PEMEROLEHAN BAHASA Djarmika	257
INTERFERENSI BAHASA ARAB DAN BAHASA JAWA PADA TUTURAN MASYARAKAT PONDOK PESANTREN SEBAGAI GEJALA PERGESERAN BAHASA Eko Widiyanto	262

PERSINGGUNGAN ANTARBAHASA MASYARAKAT NELAYAN DI PESISIR PANTAI SELATAN PACITAN	
Eny Setyowati, Sri Pamungkas	267
SELAMATKAN PERKAWINANMU, SELAMATKAN BAHASAMU: CATATAN MENGENAI DAMPAK POSITIF PERKAWINAN ENDOGAMI TERHADAP BAHASA MASYARAKAT KETURUNAN ARAB DI PASAR KLIWON SURAKARTA	
Eric Kunto Aribowo	271
KATA SAPAAN DALAM SAWALA LUHUNG MASYARAKAT ADAT KARUHUN URANG	
Euis Kurniasih	276
PERSEPSI GURU TERHADAP PENGGUNAAN DATA KORPUS DALAM PENGAJARAN TATA BAHASA BAHASA MELAYU	
Faizah Ahmad, Hishamudin Isam, Mashetoh Abd Mutalib	281
KEUNIKAN DAN KEESTETISAN PEMAKAIAN BAHASA RINENGGGA DALAM WACANA PANYANDRA UPACARA ADAT PERNIKAHAN MASYARAKAT JAWA	
Favorita Kurwidaria	286
PENYUSUNAN KAMUS SERAPAN SEBAGAI UPAYA PEMERTAHANAN BAHASA DAERAH DI INDONESIA	
I Nengah Suandi	291
PEMERTAHANAN BAHASA DAERAH DALAM PUISI TERJEMAHAN	
Ika Inayati	296
"PUPUH" SEBUAH PROYEKSI PENGEMBANGAN KARAKTER SISWA	
Juanda	300
PEMERTAHANAN DAN REVITALISASI BAHASA DAERAH DALAM PENERJEMAHAN TEATRIKAL	
Kahar Dwi Prihantono	304
AMALAN KESANTUNAN BERBAHASA BAHASA ARAHAN GOLONGAN MAHASISWA	
Melor Fauzita Binti Md. Yusoff	308
PERSAMAAN LAMBANG DAN MAKNA DALAM PERIBAHASA SEMAI DAN PERIBAHASA MELAYU	
Mohd. Rasdi Bin Saamah, Abu Hassan Abdul	313
BENTUK PERCAKAPAN WACANA HUMOR PADA ACARA PSBUKERS ANTV : SEBUAH KAJIAN PRAGMATIK	
Muhammad Iqbal Suhartomo, Riza Taufiq Rizki	318
PEMAKNAAN LEKSIKON GERAKAN TARI TRADISI SEBAGAI IDENTITAS MASYARAKAT SUNDA (LC)	
Nani Sunarni	323
ANALISIS KESALAHAN BAHASA: PERBANDINGAN ANTARA PELAJAR KELAS CEMERLANG DAN PELAJAR KELAS KURANG CEMERLANG	
Nasariah Mansor, Nooriza Wahab	328

NAMA DIRI ANAK JAWA DI ERA GLOBAL Netty Nurdiyani	332
PEMENANG VS “ORANG YANG KALAH”: REFLEKSI IDENTITAS DAN BUDAYA BANGSA Nungki Heriyati, M. Rayhan Bustam	336
PERAN BAHASA JAWA DIALEK BANYUMAS TERHADAP PERKEMBANGAN BAHASA MANDARIN DI PURWOKERTO Nunung Supriadi	341
MAKNA SIMBOLIK PERMAINAN CINGCIRIPIT SERTA MANFAATNYA BAGI PENDIDIKAN KARAKTER ANAK Nursyifa Azzahro	345
JEJAK KUASA DALAM SABDA RAJA DAN DHAWUH RAJA: TINJAUAN ANALISIS WACANA KRITIS P. Ari Subagyo	350
ALIH KODE DAN CAMPUR KODE DALAM ACARA “BUKAN SEKEDAR WAYANG” DI NET TV: SUATU KAJIAN SOSIOLINGUISTIK Pradiptia Wulan Utami	355
DAYA PRAGMATIK DAN FUNGSI MANTRA PENGLARISAN BAGI MASYARAKAT JAWA Raheni Suhita, Djoko Sulaksono, Kenfitria Diah Wijayanti	360
KEBERPIHAKAN BAHASA JURNALISTIK MEDIA MASSA DALAM KERAJAAN JOKOWI Risha Devina Rahzanie	365
ANALISIS DIMENSI SOSIAL, BUDAYA, DAN EKONOMI DALAM FENOMENA ALIH KODE DI RUSUNAWA Rosida Tiurma Manurung	369
GAYA BAHASA DALAM SASTRA LISAN LAMPUNG PEPANCOGH Siti Fitriati	374
PENGGUNAAN BAHASA JAWA DIALEK BANTEN DI KALANGAN MAHASISWA (STUDI KASUS PADA DUA PTN DI PROPINSI BANTEN) Siti Suharsih	378
RAGAM DIALEK PADA MASYARAKAT TUTUR KABUPATEN DEMAK Sofi Aulia Rahmania	382
PELESTARIAN BAHASA DAERAH MELALUI PENULISAN DAN PENERBITAN BUKU Sudirman Wilian	387
GANGGUAN EKSPRESI BERBAHASA PADA PENDERITA DEMENSIA DI KOTA SURAKARTA Sumarlam, Djatmika, Sri Pamungkas	392
KEUNIKAN ANTROPONIM RUSIA KAJIAN ANTROPONIMIKA Susi Machdalena	396

PERILAKU SOSIAL MASYARAKAT INDONESIA AKIBAT KOSA KATA SERAPAN BAHASA ASING DALAM BIDANG TEKNOLOGI DAN KULINER	
Titi Puji Lestari	399
KONSEP PENGETAHUAN DALAM PUPUJIAN SUNDA KANGJENG NABI: KAJIAN ANTROPOLINGUISTIK DI DESA GIRI ASIH KAB. BANDUNG BARAT	
Titin Lestari	404
PERSEPSI HIGH FUNCTIONING AUTISM TERHADAP ASPEK FONEMIS	
Tri Wahyu Retno Ningsih	409
PENG-IKON-AN WANITA KARIR DALAM MEDIA CETAK	
Tubiyono	413
MORFOFONEMIK BAHASA INDONESIA DAN BAHASA LAMPUNG: KAJIAN MORFOLOGI KONTRASTIF	
Veria Septianingtias	417
AKOMODASI TUTURAN MASYARAKAT SAMBAU DI WILAYAH PERBATASAN	
Wati Kurniawati	421
FONOLOGI BAHASA MELAYU PROVINSI RIAU DAN BAHASA MINANG TANAH DATAR SUMATERA BARAT	
Welsi Damayanti	426
PERAN INTEGRASI LEKSIKAL BAHASA MELAYU MALAYSIA KE DALAM BAHASA INDONESIA PADA MASYARAKAT DESA TANJUNG ARU KECAMATAN SEBATIK TIMUR	
Widyatmike Gede Mulawarman	430



## CODE SWITCHING IN CARTHAGE: AUGUSTINE'S USE OF THE PUNIC LANGUAGE AS AN INSTRUMENT OF CULTURAL UNITY

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In this essay, I use a modern linguistic concept, that of *code switching*, to provide a new analysis and interpretation of an ancient speaker-author's multilingual practices. St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430 CE) spoke and wrote in Latin, and his references to and uses of the indigenous Punic language are well-attested, but the significance of those uses is contested.<sup>1</sup> In particular, there is disagreement over Augustine's attitude toward Punic and the purposes to which he used the language. I will argue that the culturally strategic possibilities presented by the modern conception of code switching offer a favorable interpretation of Augustine's use of Punic, an interpretation that demonstrates ways in which a dominant-language speaker can strengthen cultural identity across social and ethnic boundaries through selective, code-switching use of an indigenous language.

The essay will proceed in four parts. First, I will briefly review the concept of code switching as used within sociocultural linguistics. Second, I will survey the linguistic and social context within which Augustine spoke and wrote, that of Christian North Africa in the late fourth and fifth centuries of our era. Third, I will present a categorical analysis of some of Augustine's most well-known uses of Punic. Finally, I will describe interpretations of Augustine's attitude toward Punic that have not made use of the concept of code switching, and offer my own interpretation of these instances through the lens of code switching, arguing that Augustine's uses of Punic can be understood as conscious, strategic attempts at fostering cultural identity through deliberately intermingling an indigenous language into the dominant language of his discourse.

### CODE SWITCHING IN SOCIOCULTURAL LINGUISTICS

The concept of *code switching*, understood as a speaker's alternation between or among two or more different languages during a single utterance or turn at talk, is widely used in many different fields of contemporary linguistic research.<sup>2</sup> While this concept is used within a wide variety of analytical approaches (including, for instance, structural grammatical theory and psycholinguistics), it is an especially powerful and flexible tool for pursuing sociocultural linguistics' interest in the pragmatic functions of communication. According to this emphasis, language is understood not only as the conception and conveying of semantic content, but also as the shaping of social reality<sup>3</sup> in a way that "looks beyond formal interests, to the social and cultural functions and meanings of language use."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> I use the term "speaker-author" in recognition that many of the works that have come down to us as composed texts of Augustine (from whom we have more writings than any other single ancient author) were initially composed in a conversational context, as live and relatively improvised speech, rather than as pre-written texts for oral delivery. This is especially the case for Augustine's sermons, which were spoken relatively spontaneously for a live audience, taken down by scribes (*notarii*), and later edited for posterity. See Harmless (2014) 190-197. Therefore although these texts are delivered to us as written compositions, they arguably meet the conversational requirement for code switching as it is understood in contemporary sociocultural linguistics.

<sup>2</sup> A brief account of the widespread use of the phenomenon of code switching, as well as a more elaborate account of the particular use of this concept within sociocultural linguistics, is in Nilep (2006).

<sup>3</sup> Chan (2005). In summarizing Gumperz's discussion of "the communicative function of code switching" (see below), Muthusamy (2009) writes: "Thus code switching is seen as fulfilling the relational and referential functions of language that amounts to effective communication and interlingual unity" (1).

<sup>4</sup> Nilep (2006) 2. The use of code switching as a concept within sociocultural linguistics has been especially influenced by the work of John J. Gumperz. As Gumperz wrote in his seminal 1982 work *Discourse Strategies*: "Detailed observation of verbal strategies revealed that an individual's choice of speech style has symbolic value and interpretive consequences that cannot be explained simply by correlating the incidence of linguistic variants with independently determined social and contextual categories. Sociolinguistic variables are themselves

Through its intense focus on social context and the variety of pragmatic functions, sociolinguistic analysis of code switching is well positioned to discover multiple layers of meaning where a more rigid approach might simply restrict itself to the semantic content conveyed in the situation. To this end, John J. Gumperz developed a suggestive list of strategic purposes that code switching speakers might be pursuing; code switching might be used:

- to appeal to the literate
- to appeal to the illiterate
- to convey precise meaning
- to ease communication, i.e., utilizing the shortest and the easiest route
- to negotiate with greater authority
- to capture attention, i.e. stylistic, emphatic, emotional
- to emphasize a point
- to communicate more effectively
- to identify with a particular group
- to close the status gap
- to establish goodwill and support.<sup>5</sup>

Other sociocultural linguists have added that code switching can be used to signal the speaker's awareness of the socially complex situation in which she is speaking and to negotiate among multiple roles within such a situation,<sup>6</sup> even to the extent of permitting "people to say and do, indeed to *be* two or more things where normally a choice is expected."<sup>7</sup>

While much energy and attention within sociocultural linguistics has gone into attempting to catalog the variety of functions served by code switching, theorists in this field have suggested that any listing of this variety is better understood as exemplary than exhaustive.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, as evident in the list of examples just cited, code switching may actually be employed for opposite purposes in different instance (for example, to appeal to the literate or to appeal to the illiterate), so interpreting its significance relies on careful attention to broader contextual elements. Thus, when we turn to consider Augustine's uses of Punic as instances of code switching, evaluating the significance of these uses will depend on other elements within the texts themselves and on broader social and historical context.

### **AUGUSTINE'S CONTEXT: LATIN AND PUNIC IN NORTH AFRICA<sup>9</sup>**

Augustine was born, was educated, and spent most of his life in Roman-governed North Africa, and the educational foundations he received in his early life there provided the linguistic framework for his entire life's work. To be sure, his temporary residency in Italy during his early adult life was tremendously important for the development of his philosophical perspective, his religious commitments, and his sense of the purpose of his life: he left North Africa as an ambitious young teacher of rhetoric and an adherent of a pagan cult; he returned less than ten years later as a Christian philosopher intent on pursuing a life of contemplative withdrawal from society with a small group of friends – an intention that was sharply redirected when the local Christian population availed itself of his rhetorical and intellectual gifts by first compelling him to become a priest and, shortly thereafter, a bishop, which responsibilities he carried for the rest of his life. But for all the changes Augustine experienced during

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constitutive of social reality and can be treated as part of a more general class of indexical signs which guide and channel the interpretation of intent" (vii).

<sup>5</sup> Gumperz (1982) 144, as quoted in Muthusamy (2009) 2-3.

<sup>6</sup> Nilep (2006) 11, summarizing the work of Carol Myers-Scotton.

<sup>7</sup> Nilep (2006) 12, quoting the work of Monica Heller.

<sup>8</sup> Thus Gumperz (1982), even as he goes about enumerating a list of code switching functions which "holds across language situations" (75), admits that this list is "by no means exhaustive" (81). As Nilep (2006) comments: "Code switching may serve any of a number of functions in a particular interaction, and a single turn at talk will likely have multiple effects. Therefore, any finite list of functions will be more or less arbitrary" (10).

<sup>9</sup> For discussions of the Punic language situation in Roman North Africa, I will refer to specific literature. For Augustine's life in general, however, I am relying on the well-known sequence first established in his own *Confessions*. A modern account that respects the narrative of the *Confessions* while also supplementing it with other perspectives from within and beyond that work is Brown (1967).

and after his journey to Italy, his linguistic horizons were firmly formed by the Roman colonial environment into which he was born and in which he was raised.

The two major languages in use in North Africa during Augustine’s life were Latin and Punic. Latin was the more recently arrived, but also much more culturally dominant language, particularly in the culturally Romanized urban areas. Punic was a Semitic language, related to Hebrew, introduced by the Phoenicians who established a presence centered on their settlement of Carthage in the 9<sup>th</sup> century BCE, i.e., some 1,200 years before Augustine’s time. Thus, by Augustine’s time it was a thoroughly indigenous language.<sup>10</sup> While Augustine’s family background bears strong markers of a Punic-speaking past (and his mother, in particular, may have been a native speaker of Punic), Augustine claimed Latin as his native language, and testified to having an imperfect understanding of Punic.<sup>11</sup> Therefore his uses of Punic within his Latin discourses (uses that I will later examine through the lens of code switching) represent conscious, deliberate, strategic utilization of an indigenous language to which he could trace his family’s history but which was for him relatively foreign.

In Augustine’s work as a Christian bishop, negotiating the relations between Latin- and Punic-speakers was particularly crucial. Latin was more associated with urban areas and higher social classes, Punic with rural areas and lower social classes – but none of these associations was absolute; rather, there was a range of fluency in the two languages throughout the society. Furthermore, Punic was more or less associated (especially by some adversaries, as we will see below) with the dissident Christian movement that came to be known by the name “Donatism,” a movement that Augustine (who represented the dominant Catholic form of Christianity against which the dissidents revolted) became more and more occupied in grappling with. For this reason, use of Punic was not only a matter of communication with non-Latin-speakers, but also a complex religious and political signal.

### **AUGUSTINE’S USES OF PUNIC: A CATEGORICAL ANALYSIS<sup>12</sup>**

Augustine’s references to and uses of the indigenous Punic language range far and wide throughout his works, appearing in many of his letters, sermons, Biblical commentaries, and freestanding speculative works from early to late in his career as a speaker-author. In this analytical presentation I categorize those references not according to the various genres of writing, but rather according to the particular purposes Augustine addresses in his uses of Punic. These five categories are arranged roughly in order of increasing intimacy; beginning with mere acknowledgment of Punic’s place within the North African environment in which Augustine is working, the groupings of references seem to require progressively more fine-grained involvement with the language itself.

- (1) *Providing for or referring to communication across barriers of understanding between Latin and Punic.* In several of his letters, we observe Augustine acknowledging and seeking to address the gap in understanding that will occur if translation, interpretation, or alternative communication is not provided for Punic-speakers. Thus we see him arranging an interpreter for a debate between himself and a Donatist bishop – not for the sake of the other bishop (since both of them could speak Latin), but so that all of the people in the audience could understand (*Letter 66,2*); arranging to have skilled Punic preachers and pastors on his local staff (*Letter 84, 2; Letter 209, 2*); and making use of a Punic interpreter to rebuke a lawless rebel group of Donatists (*Letter 108, 14*).<sup>13</sup> In each of these cases, we see Augustine recognizing the importance of communicating as clearly and directly to Punic speakers as to Latin speakers, but we do not see him interacting directly with the Punic language himself.

<sup>10</sup> Green (1951) 179; Millar (1968) 130.

<sup>11</sup> Wilhite (2014) 13-18.

<sup>12</sup> In this analysis, I rely on Green’s (1951) assembly of the texts, as virtually all the scholarly discussion in English of Augustine’s use of Punic since Green has done; as Cox (2015) testifies, “Green’s study of Augustine’s references to Punic is comprehensive but not exhaustive” (83-84). While I will not explicitly discuss every one of Green’s references, all of his references can be included within the analytical categories I offer here.

<sup>13</sup> Green (1951) 181-182; Shaw (2011) 427-429.



- (2) *Defending the cultural identity associated with the Punic language.* As mentioned before, the dissident, so-called "Donatist" movement in the North African church was particularly associated with less-educated (i.e., less-Romanized) Punic speakers. Even as he stakes out his opposition to this dissident group, however, Augustine is careful not to mix cultural disdain for the Punic language into his theological disapproval.

In a charming account included in a scriptural commentary, Augustine tells the story of his predecessor bishop Valerius (a Greek-speaker who was reportedly not even very fluent in Latin, much less Punic) encountering a group of Punic speakers. He heard them use the word "salus," which means "salvation" in Latin, and was excited to find that it meant "three" in Punic – excited because he was able to make a highly speculative connection between salvation and the concept of God as trinity, three-in-one. While Augustine does not pass judgment on the linguistic connection, he does seem to appreciate the old bishop's desire to exercise good will toward the Punic speakers (*in Rom. Imperf.* 13).<sup>14</sup>

A later, more complicated instance plays out in an exchange of letters (*Letters* 16 and 17) between Augustine and Maximus, one of his own former teachers, a devotee of Roman paganism. Maximus, who was writing to him in order to enlist Augustine's influential support against some Christians (likely of the dissident, "Donatist" party) who had defaced pagan shrines in the marketplace, made the mistake of mocking the Punic names and cultural heritage of the agitators, unfavorably comparing them to the supposedly glorious heritage of Roman culture in which both Maximus and Augustine were educated. In reply, Augustine sharply rebukes Maximus for his anti-Punic snobbery: "For surely, considering that you are an African, and that we are both settled in Africa, you could not have so forgotten yourself when writing to Africans as to think that Punic names were a fit theme for censure."<sup>15</sup> In both of these complicated instances, we see Augustine not just acknowledging the existence of Punic speakers and the need to communicate with them, but going out of his way to honor Punic culture and heritage, and even to claim a degree of connection to it himself. This is not yet code switching (although arguably in his etymological explorations of Punic names in the letter to Maximus begin to approach code switching), but it clearly establishes a positive, affirming stance toward the indigenous language and the culture it represents.

- (3) *Using references to Punic, along with other languages, to make larger linguistic points.* In one of his sermons, in which he is developing the distinction between "inner word" or concept (*verbum*, which can be expressed in a wide variety of different languages) and "outer word" or expression (*vox*), Augustine includes Punic among the list of different languages to which he refers (the others are Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Egyptian, and Indian) (*Serm.* 288, 3).<sup>16</sup> Once again, although Augustine does not engage directly with details of the Punic language itself, he goes out of his way to give it a place of honor among other dignified, ancient languages.
- (4) *Acknowledging specifically Punic Christian theological terminology.* We find Augustine comparing the Punic and Latin translations of Biblical words (*de Magistro* 13)<sup>17</sup> as well as describing (in Latin translation) Punic terms for theological concepts that distinctly differ from their standard Latin and Greek counterparts, such as substituting the term "salvation" for "baptism" and "life" for "Eucharist" (*Pecc. Mer.* 1, 24, 34).<sup>18</sup> Here Augustine continues to make a point of speaking with interest and respect about Punic language and cultural traditions, as well as beginning to show a greater degree of actual facility with the Punic language than in the earlier-cited references.
- (5) *Relying on Punic terms, sayings, and linguistic practices in order to establish interpretive points in his preaching and scriptural commentaries.* Augustine frequently uses Punic words that he knows as an aid to interpreting Hebrew or Aramaic words or linguistic

<sup>14</sup> Green (1951) 186; Cox (2015) 87; Shaw (2011) 430.

<sup>15</sup> *Letter* 17.2 (tr. Cunningham). Also discussed at Green (1951) 180-81 and Shaw (2011) 235-239.

<sup>16</sup> Green (1951) 183-84.

<sup>17</sup> Green (1951) 185.

<sup>18</sup> Green (1951) 187.

structures that have found their way from the Hebrew Bible into the Latin translation he is using. This includes etymologies of particular words, speculations about certain linguistic structures in the Latin translation that do not conform to Latin style but may represent a Semiticism, and literary structures (such as acrostic psalms) that occur in both Hebrew and Punic. This strategy is possible (and sometimes plausible) because Punic, Hebrew, and Aramaic are all Semitic languages.<sup>19</sup> From the perspective of modern linguistic research, some of the connections Augustine makes seem to be accurate, where Augustine's reliance on his knowledge of Punic results in a demonstrably legitimate linguistic connection, while others are far-fetched or even patently wrong. Regardless of modern linguists' judgments about their correctness, however, the significant element is Augustine's own self-understanding of what he is doing: deliberately interjecting Punic words, phrases, and linguistic structures into his Latin discourse. I will comment on how to interpret the broader significance of this act in the final section of this essay.

An equally intimate and striking reference to Punic occurs in a sermon on St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians. Some two-thirds of the way through the discourse, when he has already provided his basic interpretation of the text in question, Augustine approaches the matter again from another starting-point:

There is a well-known Punic proverb, which I will of course quote to you in Latin, because you don't all know Punic. It's an old Punic proverb... (*Sermon 167*).<sup>20</sup>

In this brief quotation, which I will discuss further in the final section of this essay, Augustine presents himself as both the transmitter and the translator of a traditional Punic saying. This has the dual effect of establishing him as someone with knowledge of colloquial Punic and calling attention to the mixed-language character of his audience.

## INTERPRETING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF AUGUSTINE'S USES OF PUNIC

Among modern scholars, there are two notable lines of interpretation of Augustine's use of the Punic language.

- (1) The first and most widespread interpretive approach attends strictly to Augustine's Punic references as lexical, grammatical, or syntactic data.<sup>21</sup> In this approach, which focuses especially on his reliance on Punic words to explain supposed Hebraisms in his Latin Bible, the main questions are how Augustine arrived at and explains his use of Punic, and to what degree he was correct in the connections he was making. Little attention is given to any social or pragmatic purposes Augustine may have had other than the surface task of explaining the biblical text.
- (2) A second line of interpretation focuses on Augustine's references to and uses of Punic in order to derive conclusions about his own sense of his identity – particularly the question whether he considers himself to be "Roman" or "African." On one side is a rather flat view of Augustine's quest of *romanitas*, according to which Augustine's entire cultural project, and indeed that of the (eventually) dominant Catholic stream of Christianity in North Africa, was wholly committed to the promotion of Latin language and culture and the suppression of indigenous Punic culture.<sup>22</sup> On the other side, more recent accounts have reopened the

<sup>19</sup> Green (1951) 183-188 describes several of these instances in detail; a number of them are also discussed at Cox (2015) 84-91.

<sup>20</sup> *Sermon 167* (tr. Hill, p. 212).

<sup>21</sup> For the most part, this describes the approach taken in the careful surveys of Green (1951), Millar (1968), and Cox (2015).

<sup>22</sup> Brown (1968) aggressively presents this view. "I would suggest that there was only one 'language of culture' in Late Roman Africa – that was Latin; that the particular form of Christianity in the Later Empire, Catholic and Donatist alike, demanded a 'language of culture'; and, so, that the rapid Christianisation of Numidia involved, not a resurgence of any regional culture, but the creation of a Latin – or sub-Latin – religious culture on an unprecedented scale" (89). "The Christian culture of Africa, therefore, was exclusively Latin. . . . This, I would

question of Augustine's self-identity through the use of postcolonial theory, particularly the concept of *hybridity*.<sup>23</sup> On this view, when Augustine uses Punic words, linguistic structures, and imagery within his pastoral work as a speaker-author, even as he is working at Romanization he is also reinforcing a sense of shared cultural identity in other-than-strictly-Roman roots.

Applying the modern sociolinguistic concept of code switching to Augustine's uses of the Punic language offers helpful extension to both of these lines of interpretation.

- (1) Code switching is understood within sociocultural linguistics as a (more or less) conscious, deliberate communicative strategy – a linguistic performance that is aimed at effecting a particular pragmatic purpose or establishing a particular social construction. The result of this perspective is that Augustine's uses of Punic can be examined not only for their value as lexical, grammatical, or syntactic data, but rather as also accomplishing a social purpose for Augustine's hearers. In this regard it is highly important that Augustine's direct uses of Punic occur primarily in his sermons and letters, contexts in which he was aware of directly addressing a community that was bilingual to varying degrees. When Augustine explains biblical words, images, linguistic structures, and literary forms by recourse to the Punic language, he is not merely utilizing a convenient source of explanations (as the first line of interpretation described above as tended to emphasize); rather, he is engaging in the complex and purposeful social ritual of code switching. Within the framework of his dominant Latin discourse, he deliberately connects to the indigenous Punic language, associating it to some degree with his own authoritative persona and granting it a place of dignity within that dominant-language discourse.

Augustine's conscious, deliberate, strategic code switching is especially evident in the way he refers to a Punic proverb in *Sermon 167*, as described earlier. Within a very short section of the text, Augustine accomplishes several purposes at once. He identifies himself as aware and appreciative of Punic linguistic and cultural traditions, since he knows and can quote the proverb, even implying that he could quote it in Punic if he chose to do so; he points out to his audience their bilingual and bicultural identity, and indicates the need to create a bridge between them; and he offers himself as the creator of that bridge. In doing so, he demonstrates several of the strategic purposes of code switching identified by sociolinguistic theorists: he captures attention, negotiates with greater authority, emphasizes a point, identifies with both groups present, and establishes goodwill and support, permitting him "to say and do, indeed to *be* two or more things where normally a choice is expected."<sup>24</sup>

- (2) Understanding Augustine's uses of Punic in terms of code switching also helps to adjudicate and redirect the question of how those uses relate to the question of his "identity." Peter Brown's framing of the question of identity tended to cast it in starkly all-or-nothing terms: if Augustine was Roman, he could not be, in any significant sense, "African;" within that understanding, his uses of Punic could be nothing more than a mere concession to the local situation. Seeing Augustine's uses of Punic as instances of deliberate code switching, on the other hand, offers support to David Wilhite's interpretation of Augustine's identity as a "hybrid;" by his strategic uses of Punic within his Latin discourse, Augustine helps to create a new social reality, the bilingual, bicultural North African church. He has made use of an indigenous language for the purpose of constructing a new and newly inclusive personal and cultural identity.

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suggest, was the cultural function of the rise of Christianity in Late Roman Africa: far from fostering native tradition, it widened the franchise of the Latin language" (92). In Brown's view, Augustine's uses of Punic are a mere concession, nothing more than "a step towards full Latinity" which was the ultimate goal (89).

<sup>23</sup> This approach is well represented by Wilhite (2014), who directly addresses and challenges Brown's view. Taking into account a number of the texts of Augustine discussed above, Wilhite concludes that Augustine's story "fits into a postcolonial reading wherein no identity (African or otherwise) can be essentialized, but the conflicting selves and competing loyalties are held in tension" (23).

<sup>24</sup> Gumperz (1982) 144, Nilep (2006) 12.

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